

Message Text

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72

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07

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R 291616Z APR 75

FM USMISSION USBERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 835

AMEMBASSY BONN

INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L USBERLIN 831

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PFOR, WB, GE

SUBJECT: ARREST IN GDR OF BERLIN JUNGHE UNION LEADER

1. IMPACT OF EXCESSIVELY SEVERE SENTENCES (LIFE IN TWO CASES AND EIGHT YEARS IN THIRD) RECENTLY METED OUT IN GDR TO TWO WEST BERLINERS AND ONE FRG RESIDENT FOR ATTEMPTED EXFILTRATION HAS BEEN COMPOUNDED IN BERLIN BY NEWS OF ARREST BY GDR SECURITY AUTHORITIES OF VOLKER FRANKE, 33-YEAR OLD MEMBER OF BERLIN JUNGHE UNION LEADERSHIP. FRANKE, WHO ESCAPED FROM GDR IN 1963, WAS PICKED UP APRIL 5 ALONG WITH KOREAN-BORN WIFE WHILE RETURNING FROM VISIT TO MOTHER IN JENA. FIRST MADE KNOWN IN WEST BERLIN APRIL 15, ARREST WAS CONFIRMED TWO DAYS LATER BY ADN ANNOUNCEMENT, WHICH GAVE AS REASON "STRONG SUSPICION OF DIRECT ACTIVITY ON BEHALF OF IMPERIALIST SECRET SERVICES."

2. KLAUS LANDOWSKY, CHAIRMAN OF BERLIN JUNGHE UNION, IMMEDIATELY PROTESTED ARREST, CALLING GDR CHARGES "DELIBERATE MISLEADING OF PUBLIC OPINION." GDR, HE
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ASSERTED, MUST BE EQUATING ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP IN CDU-

AFFILIATED ORGANIZATION WITH ESPIONAGE. NEVERTHELESS, LANDOWSKY CONTACTED MISSION OFFICER APRIL 18 TO INQUIRE WHETHER FRANKE HAD IN FACT EVER WORKED FOR A US AGENCY. WE RESPONDED, AFTER CHECKING, THAT WE POSSESSED NO INFORMATION ON FRANKE.

3. FRG PERMANENT REPRESENTATION IN EAST BERLIN HAS SOUGHT PERMISSION TO VISIT FRANKE AND HIS WIFE IN PRISON, BUT THUS FAR WITHOUT SUCCESS. FRG DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE BRAEUTIGAM TOLD MISSION OFFICER THAT GDR SECURITY SERVICE WOULD NORMALLY INSIST ON COMPLETING ITS INVESTIGATION--WHICH COULD TAKE MONTHS-BEFORE VISITS WERE ALLOWED, AND THAT FRANKE'S CASE WAS COMPLICATED BY FACT THAT HE WAS WEST BERLIN RESIDENT. LANDOWSKY HAS PUBLICLY CRITICIZED PERMANENT REPRESENTATION FOR NOT DOING ENOUGH TO SECURE FRANKE'S RELEASE, AND HAS DEMANDED MORE ENERGETIC FEDERAL INTERVENTION ON HIS BEHALF. GEORGE

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